



IMCOM *Safety* Gram



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Ladder Safety

When it comes to basic workplace equipment, it does not get much simpler than the ladder. Because ladders are so simplistic, many people overlook their potential hazards. Yet falls account for 15% of workplace injuries and deaths. Many of these falls are from ladders and may have been prevented if a few basics had been followed.

Ladder Hazards

Two questions you should ask each time you use a ladder are:

- ◆ What is condition the ladder?
- ◆ Am I using the right ladder for the job?

Inspecting the Ladder

When checking the condition of the ladder, keep these guidelines in mind:

- ◆ Rungs must be intact and free from grease or oil
- ◆ Make sure there are no splinters or sharp edges
- ◆ See that metal ladders are not dented or bent
- ◆ The ladders safety feet should be in place and in good condition
- ◆ All support braces and bolts must be secure
- ◆ Make sure ropes are not torn or frayed
- ◆ Make sure the hinge spreader works properly.

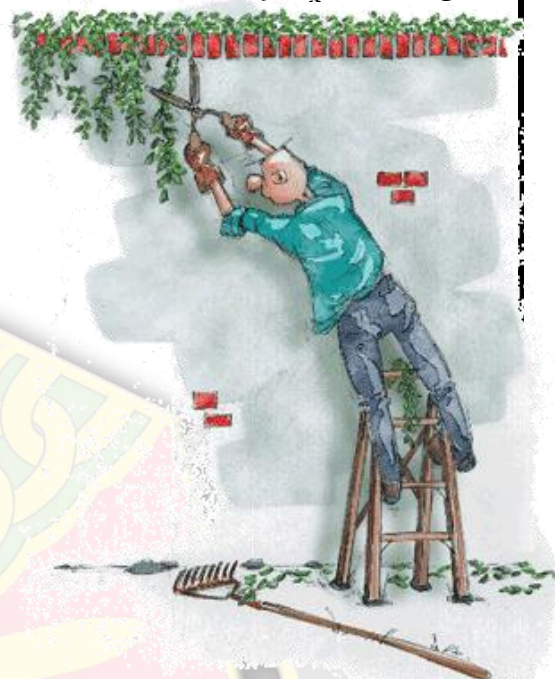
Choosing the Ladder

- ◆ Ladders have weight limits. Make sure the ladder you are using is rated for the right weight
- ◆ Ladders also vary in length. Choose one that is high enough for the job, but not so high that it becomes a hazard

Using Ladders Safely

Some other thing to remember include:

- ◆ Make sure the ladder's feet are parallel to the surface it rests against
- ◆ Make sure the base is tied or held and that the top is anchored
- ◆ Avoid the top two steps of a stepladder and the top four rungs on other ladders
- ◆ Always face the ladder while you are on it
- ◆ Place the ladder at a safe angle. The distance from the bottom of the ladder to the wall should be about 1/4 of the ladder's working height
- ◆ Do not use ladders that have been exposed to fire or corrosive chemicals
- ◆ Do not use a ladder for unintended purposes, such as in place of scaffolding
- ◆ Never allow more than one person on a ladder at a time
- ◆ Always be aware of the location of electrical wires and never use metal ladders around electrical exposures
- ◆ Use both hands when climbing a ladder
- ◆ Avoid excessive stretching or leaning



Choosing and using ladders wisely is a step in the right direction.